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**Opening Protection Exception: 2023 Florida Building Code 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, *Existing*  
Section 707.4 Replacement of Windows & Doors, Exception 1**

Section 707.4 Replacement of Windows & Doors, Exception 1, often referred to as the “25% Exception Rule,” allows an exception to the opening protection requirement of Chapter 16 of the 2023 Florida Building Code 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, *Building*. It applies only to existing one & two family dwellings that were **not** constructed under any of the Florida Building Codes. The first Florida Building Code (FBC), the 2001 FBC, had an effective date of March 2002.

An address search of our online permit database can be used to determine if the exception is applicable. Go here: <https://aca-prod.accela.com/BOCC/Default.aspx?culture=en-US> to access the database. Permit number assignments begin with the 4-digit year, e.g. **2002**, followed by the 2-digit month, e.g. March is **03**, and then followed by a sequential series of numbers, e.g. **1234**. This becomes the permit number, e.g. 2002031234. If an address search of the database shows a one or two family dwelling with a permit number starting with **200203xxxx** or higher, the exception does not apply. The database goes as far back as the year 2000.

To qualify for the exception, the following criteria must be met:

1. The dwelling must have been constructed under a permit that pre-dates March, 2002 (i.e. not under the various code cycles of the Florida Building Code).
2. The permit application form for replacement windows, doors and/or shutters contains specific “boxes” that must be filled in justifying the request as follows:
  - a. The total area of existing glazed openings must be identified.
  - b. The total area of proposed replacement glazed opening must be identified.
  - c. The percentage of glazed opening being reviewed must be identified.
  - d. A “plan view” drawing must be attached to the application identifying each opening size, window & door types as well as room types.
3. A permit application review by the address of the property is conducted to confirm that no other glazed openings have been permitted within 12 months of completion of any previous permit.
4. If all of the above is validated by permit application review, then the exception from the windborne debris protection requirement is allowed and will be documented in the permit file for future reference.

Note: The “25% Exception Rule” does **not** apply to proposed new openings. It also does **not** apply when glazed opening size has been modified **nor** to the introduction of new glass to a solid door. It also does **not** apply to Commercial.